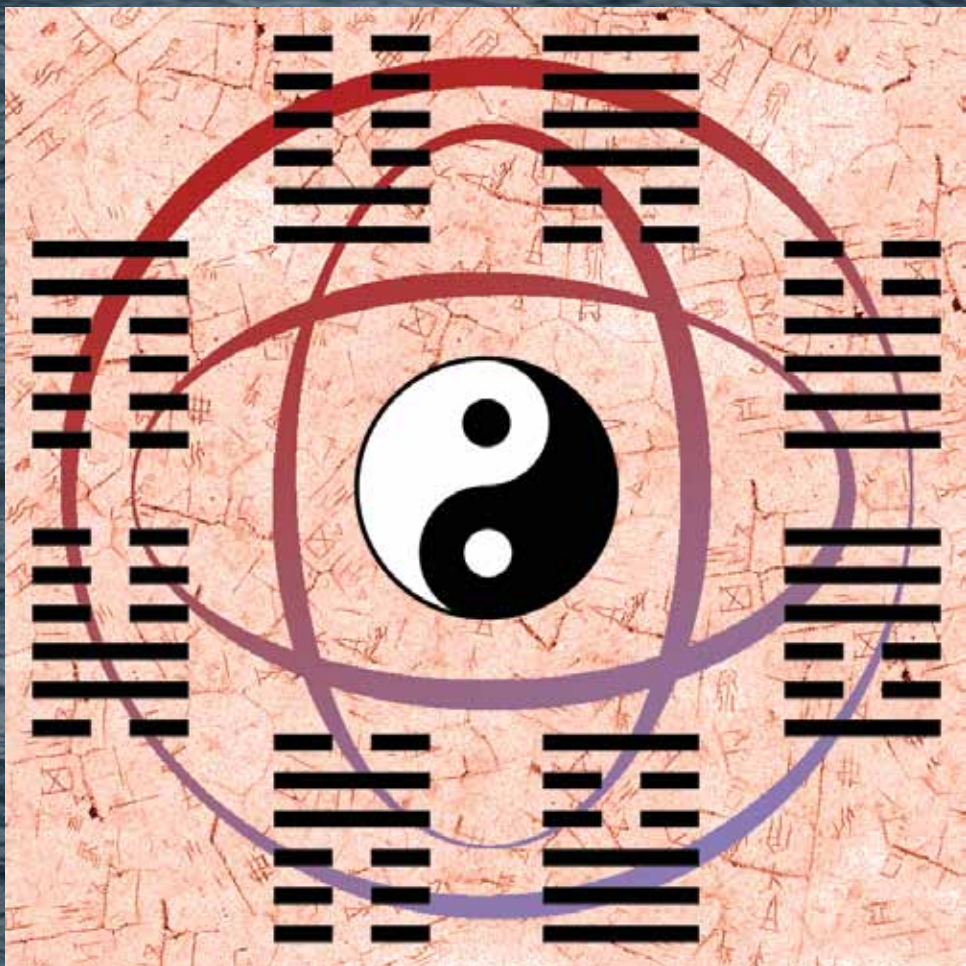


# I CHING: Riding the Changes



Daniel Bernardo

<http://yijingdao.org>



FREE ABRIDGED VERSION

I CHING  
Riding the Changes

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Daniel Bernardo

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# Introduction

The *Yijing* or *Book of Changes* (previously transliterated<sup>1</sup> as *I Ching*) was intended as a strategic oracle for feudal lords in the Chinese Bronze Age, three thousand years ago, but with the pass of the centuries the book was evolving and become more philosophical, under the influence of Confucianism.

The *Book of Changes* is both an oracular medium and a book of wisdom, but it doesn't try to answer why we are here or where are we going after death; instead it focuses in the business of living. It is also a human attempt to throw light in the natural laws that command change.

Change is the natural state of this world. All things live in continuous flow. All beings are born, grow, evolve and finally decay and die. By observing the natural cycles, the sages of ancient times achieved an intuitive understanding of the laws that regulate change. Change is not chaotic, but it follows a pattern of development. Change is inevitable; situations are never completely static and unchanging.

The 64 hexagrams (or sections) of the *Yijing* are a description of the different ways in which situations can evolve, they describe the steps of change and tell us how to act effectively at every moment.

Since change happens through time, each hexagram describes different times. There are times for advancing, times for retreating, times for peace, times for war, and so on. Each hexagram depicts a different time, a different pattern of change. This idea has echoes in the Bible (*Ecclesiastes 3:1-8*):

*For everything there is a season, and a time for every purpose under heaven: a time to be born, and a time to die; a time to plant, and a time to pluck up that which is planted; a time to kill, and a time to heal; a time to break down, and a time to build up; a time to weep, and a time to laugh; a time to mourn, and a time to dance; a time to cast away stones, and a time to gather stones together; a time to embrace, and a time to refrain from embracing; a time to seek, and a time to lose;*



*a time to keep, and a time to cast away; a time to tear, and a time to sew; a time to keep silence, and a time to speak; a time to love, and a time to hate; a time for war, and a time for peace.*

Knowing which kind of time we are experiencing allows us to take both preventive measures and to plan the best course of action in advance. We call to such adaptation to the time “Riding the changes”. Changes are the natural waves that traverse time. Riding the changes effectively means to take the best course between the rough waves of life. Something we may have a smooth sailing, and ride along with the tides with no effort, but in other cases we should put a great deal of effort to manage well the situation.

The *Yijing* doesn’t propose surrendering to obstacles and bad times, but always offers the best way to deal with both trouble and opportunities.

Content and Structure

The *Yijing* describes change as a permanent cycle between two principles, one active and energetic and the other passive and yielding. They are the building blocks of the 64 hexagrams of the Book of Changes. Long after the first part of the *Yijing* was written, these principles were named as *yang* and *yin*. The next table shows how *yang* and *yin* look when drawn as hexagram’s lines.

Figure	Description	Attributes
	<i>Yin</i> line	Masculine, active, light, hot, hard.
	<i>Yang</i> line	Feminine, passive, dark, cold, soft.

All hexagrams, like the number 4 *Youthful Folly*, shown below, are drawings composed by six *yang* and *yin* lines (except the hexagrams 1 and 2, wich are pure *yang* and pure *yin*):



*Yin* and *Yang* form a binary system; by combining both types of lines in six different positions, 64 different hexagrams are created, forming the structure of the *Yijing*. All hexagrams are interconnected between them; when the oracle answers a question it is usual to receive a pair of interconnected hexagrams that describes the flow of the situation.

The table in the next page shows the 64 hexagrams, its numbers and its binary numbers as well, following *Shao Yong* arrangement.

Each line in an hexagram describes a step in a situation. The lines are counted from bottom to top, being the bottom line the first one. Hexagrams

**Shao Yong arrangement of the hexagrams,  
also known as *Fuxi* order<sup>2</sup>**

(The numbers in bold show the actual number for each hexagram, following the order in the *Yijing*, the smaller numbers below them show the binary values for each hexagram)

<b>2</b> 000000	<b>23</b> 000001	<b>8</b> 000010	<b>20</b> 000011	<b>16</b> 000100	<b>35</b> 000101	<b>45</b> 000110	<b>12</b> 000111
<b>15</b> 001000	<b>52</b> 001001	<b>39</b> 001010	<b>53</b> 001011	<b>62</b> 001100	<b>56</b> 001101	<b>31</b> 001110	<b>33</b> 001111
<b>7</b> 010000	<b>4</b> 010001	<b>29</b> 010010	<b>59</b> 010011	<b>40</b> 010100	<b>64</b> 010101	<b>47</b> 010110	<b>6</b> 010111
<b>46</b> 011000	<b>18</b> 011001	<b>48</b> 011010	<b>57</b> 011011	<b>32</b> 011100	<b>50</b> 011101	<b>28</b> 011110	<b>44</b> 011111
<b>24</b> 100000	<b>27</b> 100001	<b>3</b> 100010	<b>42</b> 100011	<b>51</b> 100100	<b>21</b> 100101	<b>17</b> 100110	<b>25</b> 100111
<b>36</b> 101000	<b>22</b> 101001	<b>63</b> 101010	<b>37</b> 101011	<b>55</b> 101100	<b>30</b> 101101	<b>49</b> 101110	<b>13</b> 101111
<b>19</b> 110000	<b>41</b> 110001	<b>60</b> 110010	<b>61</b> 110011	<b>54</b> 110100	<b>38</b> 110101	<b>58</b> 110110	<b>10</b> 110111
<b>11</b> 111000	<b>26</b> 111001	<b>5</b> 111010	<b>9</b> 111011	<b>34</b> 111100	<b>14</b> 111101	<b>43</b> 111110	<b>1</b> 111111

describe how a situation develops in time, starting with the first line and how it evolves until reaching the sixth line.

Each one of the 64 hexagrams has some texts attached to its drawing:

1. The hexagram title, known as “hexagram tag” is composed of the first one or two Chinese characters that form the Judgment.
2. The Judgment describes the characteristics of the situation and its prognosis, either good or bad.
3. The Image, analyzes the relation of the trigrams<sup>3</sup> that comprise the hexagram and suggests the best course of action based on the symbolic value of the trigrams.
4. There are six other texts, one for each line,<sup>4</sup> which describe how the situation will evolve and its opportunities and dangers.

## Reality and discourse

The creators of the *Yijing* had different values than contemporary society. They lived in a feudalist and highly hierarchical society, where strong men ruled, and inferiors and women were submissive.

Hence, some people may find unfamiliar or still offensive some ideas or terminology in this translation. Democracy, feminism and egalitarianism were not values in use in the Chinese Bronze Age, and the discourse of the era may sound alien to present day people. In the comments to the hexagrams I follow contemporary trends, and I have tried to use gender neutral words as much as the English language allows me without forcing it; but in the translation I have been as faithful as possible to the original text; political correctness was not my goal but accuracy. I have not tried to use gender neutral terms replacing the original discourse because in such case, this would not be a translation but an entirely new book and it is not my intention to rewrite the *Yijing*.

As Richard Wilhelm<sup>5</sup> said:

*“We must hold here to the fundamental principle that the Book of Changes is to be explained in the light of its own content and of the era to which it belongs.”*

The fundamental principles of life have not changed since the Book of Changes was written, we are as bad or as good as our remote ancestors were, but we may be more hypocritical than them. The valuable insights about human relationships that the *Yijing* depicts are still valid and can be applied to our lives in the same way that they were put to use in ancient China.

Today as yesterday, fate is determined by both factors outside our reach and by our own capacity. The *Yijing* can help us to understand better the relation between external reality and our will, and because that it is an invaluable tool that will enhance the quality of our lives if we hear its message.

## About this Translation

This translation of the 64 hexagrams is concise and oriented to divinatory usage. To help readers understand better the meaning of the text, notes with historical and cultural references have been added. To avoid duplication of content some terms are not fully explained where they appear. Please see the Glossary at the end of this book for explanations about unknown terms.

Notice that the Chinese characters for the tag (or title) of each hexagram are shown in vertical fashion, following tradition, they should be read from top to bottom.

## Notes

1. For most of the twentieth century the Wade-Giles system was used to indicate how to pronounce Chinese characters. Wade-Giles is a romanization system, which shows the pronunciation of Chinese ideograms with western letters. But in the last decades of the 20th century, the *Pinyin* pronunciation system (meaning “sound-spelling”) was adopted by China and since then it prevailed almost universally. *Yijing* is the *Pinyin* version of *I Ching*, which was written following the Wade-Giles pronunciation system. *Yi* means “change”, *Jing* original meaning was “warp in a loom”, but later came to mean “scripture, canon, classic”, hence the book is known as *Book of Changes* or *Classic of Changes*.

2. *Shao Yong* (1011-1077 AD) created the ordering of the *Yijing* hexagrams that is also known as *Fuxi* order.

In *Fuxi* arrangement, hexagrams are ordered by placing the same upper trigram in each column. All hexagrams in the first column have ☰ as upper trigram, the hexagrams in the second column have ☷, and so on, using a different trigram for each column.

In a similar way, all hexagrams in each row share the same lower trigram, ☷ for the first row, ☰ for the second one, and so on.

If we take 0 for broken lines and 1 for whole lines and with the upper line at the right, the hexagrams (read from left to right and top to bottom) give the binary notations for 000000 to 111111, equivalent to 0 to 63 in the decimal system.

The binary system, which is used nowadays by computers, was invented by *Leibniz* in the XVII century, but *Sha Yong* hexagram table showed a binary notation six centuries before.

In the decimal system the values of the digits depend of its location, the value for each number to the left of another differs by a multiple of ten. In the binary system the values of numbers (only 0 and 1 are used) in different locations differ by a multiple of two. Using only two numerals, 0 and 1, any decimal value can be represented in the binary system.

Binary	Decimal
0	0
1	1
10	2
11	3
100	4
101	5

3. To know more about the trigrams see **The Eight Trigrams**, in page 359.

4. Only the hexagrams 1 and 2 have seven texts attached to the lines, one for each line plus one more which should be only read when all lines change.

5. *Richard Wilhelm* was a German sinologist, and missionary. His famous translation of the *Yijing* helped greatly to popularize the *Book of Changes* in the Western world.

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## How to consult the Oracle

It has been said that the answer is always hidden inside the question, meaning that you can only get the right answer if you know how to express your question clearly or if you know the right question.

The *Yijing* will not answer your question unequivocally but instead will tell you a moral history, sometimes including several protagonists and possible outcomes.

It is your task to put yourself inside the history, to understand which part is yours and which is the relation between answer and question.

The oracle will chart for you the possibilities and dangers lurking ahead; if you open your intuition you will understand the message. May be the answer will not be clear at first, but if you keep meditating over it, at some point you will understand its meaning.

The questions should be clear cut, avoiding asking about several possibilities at once. If you want to know which option is best, you can ask about one option first and then ask again about other choice in a second consult, but never include several alternatives in the same question. Think carefully what you want to ask, take your time; do not ask the oracle in a hurry or in a disturbed emotional state.

Examples:

Should I buy the house at XXXX? This question is concise and will simplify the understanding of the answer.

Should I buy XXX or ZZZ? This sort of question will prevent you from getting a clear answer.

Also you could simply ask the oracle to describe the situation, optionally giving a time frame.

Example:

What are my chances for starting my studies in forestry in the next six months?

Always write down your question before beginning your consult, afterwards you may write the answer in the same paper sheet.

Notice that the oracle may mirror your fears and expectatives in its answer, casting light over your hopes and fears.

In all cases the answer is mainly about you and your interaction with the world around you. The oracle will not change an objective situation, but can help you to make the most within your situation, indicating both your shortcomings and your strong points.

Sometimes you will apprehend intuitively the meaning of the answer at once, other times you may have to ponder about it for several days until at least you find what the answer means for you.

### Getting the hexagram

The consultation process will generate six numbers, and you will draw a hexagram according to them.

Most people use the coin-tossing method to get the numbers, but we also describe the ancient yarrow-stalk method in **The Yarrow-Stalks Oracle** in page 371.

Some people like to follow a predefined ritual before divination; if you are inclined to do so, the ritual may help you to put your mind at ease.

Indeed focusing your mind is what matters most, if your concentration wanders during the consultation it may affect the final outcome. In an ideal world you should not consult the *Yijing* if you are not relaxed and without distractions, an altered state of mind doesn't improve the practice of divination.





### Using the coins for obtaining an hexagram

It is said that this method has been in use since the fourth century BC, the yarrow-stalks method is older, but since the coin-tossing method is faster and easier it is more widely used at the present time.

Traditionally three Chinese coins are used, but you can use any kind of coins, provided that all them are equal.

The coins should be tossed six times on a flat surface to get the six lines of a hexagram.

You will draw the hexagram from bottom to top, according to how the coins fall, as the following table shows:

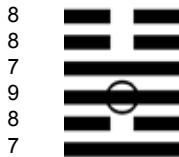
Coins	Numbers	Description	Drawing
Three tails	$2 + 2 + 2 = 6$	A changing <i>yin</i> line	
Three heads	$3 + 3 + 3 = 9$	A changing <i>yang</i> line	
2 tails and 1 head	$2 + 2 + 3 = 7$	A non-changing <i>yang</i> line	
2 heads and 1 tail	$3 + 3 + 2 = 8$	A non-changing <i>yin</i> line	

As you can see tails are worth 2 and heads 3; when you add the numbers for the three coins you will get 6, 7, 8 or 9 for each coin toss.

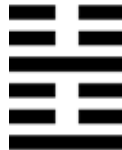
Broken lines are *yin* and whole lines are *yang*. Changing lines will mutate, generating a second hexagram, with all mutating lines inverted: *yin* will become *yang* and vice versa.

After you toss the coins six times you will have a six lines drawing which depicts the oracle answer.

Example:



The first hexagram (55) is the one that you draw following the coin tossing. In this example it has only a changing *yang* line in the third position.



Draw the second hexagram (51) by replacing the changing line by a non-changing line. If the changing line is *yang* it is replaced by a *yin* line and vice versa. In this case the changing *yang* line in the third position was replaced by a *yin* line to form the second hexagram.

Of course, if there are no changing lines you will not have a second hexagram.

To get the hexagram number for your drawing see the **Chart of the Trigrams and Hexagrams** in page 375, at the end of this book.

In the example shown above, we must read not only the Judgment, the Image and the third line of the hexagram 55, but also the Judgment and the Image for the hexagram 51.

The hexagram 55 is the starting point of a development leading to the final situation, i.e., hexagram 51.

### How to interpret the oracle

The two hexagrams together are your answer. The first hexagram shows the immediate situation and the second one its development, although both of them may be related in other ways.

In the second hexagram the text belonging to the moving line(s) is disregarded.

### How to interpret changing lines

We propose some rules to avoid possible contradictions in oracular answers and to make more clear the interpretation.

If less than six lines change, you should read all them in the first hexagram.

Notice that if only the sixth line (the top one) changes or if more than four lines change, the emphasis will be shifted to the second hexagram.

If several lines change the uppermost changing line is the most important and takes precedence. In case of contradiction between that line and the Judgment or the other lines, take the uppermost line as the valid oracle.

### Alternative procedure for interpreting changing lines

Each changing line can be changed on its own, without modifying the other ones. In that way each changing line will generate a different hexagram. If only one line changes, you do not need to do that since the second hexagram will be the only other one that you will have.

When changing line by line to generate other hexagrams, only the changed line in the new hexagrams will be read, and solely as a comment for the original changing line.

Use this method with prudence, and only when you need to clarify the meaning of some line, otherwise it may cause more confusion than clarity.

### No lines change

You have a single hexagram. Read only the Judgment and the Image. The situation may evolve slowly.

### Only one line changes

Read the changing line in the first hexagram as well as the Judgment and the Image of each hexagram. The line takes precedence over the Judgment. In case of contradiction between the line and the Judgment, take the line as the valid oracle.

If the line that changes is the uppermost one, the hexagram time is passing away; in such case read only the changing line and the second hexagram.

### **Two, Three or Four lines change**

Read the changing lines in the first hexagram, besides the Judgment and the Image of each hexagram.

### **Five lines change:**

Read the changing lines in the first hexagram, besides the Judgment and the Image of each hexagram.

The situation described by the first hexagram's time is going to end soon.

### **All lines change**

The situation described by the first hexagram's time is going to end soon or it has already terminated; therefore the second hexagram is far more important than the first one. Do not read the changing lines.

Read the Judgment and the Image of each hexagram.

Notice that the hexagrams 1 and 2 have an extra line statement that should be read when all lines change.

### **Relations between changing lines**

The lines describe the evolution of a situation, from bottom (start) to top (end), each line depicts a different moment—which can be good or bad—but also they may describe relations between different persons.

The lines have a natural hierarchy; hence many times they describe relations between people of different social standing.

The first line represents somebody in a low position or an inexperienced person, a novice, somebody that is just beginning to enter the situation.

The second line represents a wife, an assistant, an employee with some responsibility, a functionary who is far away from the center of power.

The third line represents a transitional place, a middleman.

The fourth line represents a minister, a functionary that works closely with the higher authorities.

The fifth line represents a manager, governor, king, or the head of a household.

The sixth line represents a wise person, a spiritual leader, a counselor, somebody that has withdrawn from the situation; but sometimes it also depicts somebody who went too far or is a transgressor.

Adjacent lines may be related by a solidarity relation, especially between *yang* and *yin* lines.

The lines in the 1<sup>st</sup>, 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> places are related with the lines in the 4<sup>th</sup>, 5<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> places by a relation of correspondence. *Yang* lines correspond with *yin* lines and vice versa.

The above information gives a general idea about the line hierarchy and relations, but there are many special situations and exceptions that we cannot explain here.

### The Trigrams

Each hexagram can be divided into two trigrams, one comprises the three lower lines and the other the three upper lines.

In the Image, you can see how the proper action for each hexagram is deduced from its constituent trigrams.

The Trigrams also have a broad symbolical range of meanings, that sometimes can make more meaningful the interpretation of the hexagrams.

In another interpretation level, the lower trigram indicates the inner world, the subjective part of the situation, your feelings; the upper trigram depicts the outer world, the exterior situation.

Information about the Trigrams symbols can be found in **The Eight Trigrams**, in page 375.


# History of the Book of Changes

The *Yijing* (or *I Ching*, when using the Wade-Giles romanization system) is a book from the Chinese Bronze Age (about 1000 BC) and as many other ancient texts, it was written by a process of aggregation of material from different periods and authors.

By the time of the Han dynasty (206 BC to 220 AD) it became something similar to the text we know today as the “Classic of Changes” or “Book of Changes”. Of course, the interpretation of the text has changed over time, but the ordering of the material has remained unchanged since the *Han* Dynasty to the present.

The Classic of Changes is composed of 64 short chapters, composed of several elements and 10 appendixes, known as “The Ten Wings”.

The parts of each chapter (commonly called hexagrams) are:

- A graphic symbol (*Gua*), a drawing composed of six parallel lines, some filled and other broken. Example: .
- A text, whose first one or two characters give name to the hexagram and explains its meaning, commonly called “The Judgment” (*Guaci*).
- Short texts attached to each of the six lines (*Yaoci*), except for the hexagrams 1 and 2 that have seven texts.
- Several texts, from the Ten Wings: The Image (*Daxiang*), the *Tuan* Commentary, etc. (Only The Image is included in this translation).

## Composition of the text according to Chinese tradition

Legend has it that *Fuxi* designed the 64 hexagrams (hypothetically about 3000 BC) and King *Wen* wrote the texts that accompany each hexagram, *Guaci*, “The Judgment”.

His son, the Duke *Dan* of *Zhou* added explanatory texts for each line of the hexagrams.

The texts due to King *Wen* and his son were known in his time (the Bronze Age in China) as *Zhouyi*, “The Changes of the Zhou” being *Zhou* the name of the dynasty started by King *Wen*.

Several hundred years later, the Confucian school added comments to the text, which are known as the Ten Wings (*Shiying*), and are divided into ten parts.

These comments can be placed either at the end of the text, as appendices, or inserted into each hexagram, as is usually done with the commentary called “The Image”, which comprises part of the Wings 3rd and 4th.

### Modern hypothesis about the origin of the text

On the origin of the hexagrams symbols and the texts that accompany them there is no certainty, but it might be possible that the traditional story about the composition of the text (The Judgment and the lines) is correct and that King *Wen* –which was a real historical figure– was the compiler of texts from the oracular tradition (circa 1000 BC), and that his son did something similar for the lines of the hexagrams.

The Ten Wings come from various sources, some of them certainly are of the Confucian school, but it is not currently believed that they are a direct work from the hand of Confucius. Probably the Ten Wings were composed between 200 BC and 200 A.D., during the *Han* dynasty



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*qián*

**The Creative / Activity /  
Dynamic Force**



The Chinese character for this hexagram tag shows the sun rising behind the trees of the jungle.

This is one of the eight hexagrams that are comprised by the same trigram repeated twice, in this case ☰, *The Creative*.

Please see **The Eight Trigrams**, in the page 359 for more information about ☰.

### **Associated meanings**

Spirit power, creative, force, dynamic, strong action, vigor, constant, heaven, heavenly generative principle (male), father, sovereign, power above the human, *yang* power, active, vigorous appearance.

### **Judgment**

The Creative.

Outstanding success.

The determination is favorable.

This hexagram is comprised of six solid, *yang* lines, representing light, action and strength. It describes a great accumulation of energy and consequently the need for steadfast action to channel such power in the proper direction.

The figure of the dragon appears as protagonist in five of the seven<sup>1</sup> line statements.

The Chinese dragon, different from the western dragon, is not evil, but beneficial. It is a legendary animal, a powerful force that surges from the waters, associated with rain, floods, heaven and the hexagram 1. It also has supernatural godly power. It is at home either under the waters or flying in heaven and has supernatural energy. Also it is related with the supreme authority (the emperor).

In this hexagram the dragon symbolizes somebody with its same qualities, and the lines show its ascension from a low position (under the water) up to the sky.

This is one of the few hexagrams that mention the “four cardinal virtues”: **yuan**: outstanding (fundamentality, primal, originating, spring season, head, sublime, great, grand); **heng**: success (prevalence, growing, penetrating, treat, offering, sacrifice); **li**: determination (perseverance, constancy, correct and firm) and **heng**: favorable (advantageous, suitable, beneficial, lucky). One or more of the cardinal virtues appear in 50 different hexagrams, but only the hexagrams 1, 2 (with some modification), 3, 17, 19, 25 and 49 have the four virtues in its *Judgment*. Since the *Han* Dynasty onwards they have become keywords of Confucian thought, four qualities or virtues applicable both to Heaven and to the noble-minded person.

In the Confucian tradition the dragon is associated with the four cardinal virtues. Any oracle encompassing the four cardinal virtues indicates that success is granted, but only if you don't stray from the good; for this reason determination in the right way is the key to success.

### The Image

Heaven action is strong and dynamic.

Thus the noble never ceases to strengthen himself.

In the same way that heaven revolves daily, the creative person should be ready for incessant action, a movement that keeps going along through time, renovating itself each day.

### First Nine

Submerged dragon.

Do not act.

The dragon is at home either under the waters or flying in heaven.

It was believed that dragons caused rain when they ascended into the sky, hence they were beneficial since the rain watered the crops.

In this line the dragon is hibernating; still not ready to make its mark in the world. It means that the time is not yet ripe for action and that you should wait and keep a low profile until you are ready.

**Career:** There will be no changes. Premature action would be dangerous because you are not yet prepared.

**Private life:** Quiet life. Do not start anything new.

**Health, Feelings and Social life:** Good health. Rest is advised. Be discreet.

## Second Nine

Dragon in the field.

It is favorable to see the great man.

You are entering your field of action in life, where you will find your peers.

The word translated as “field” also means “hunt”. The hunt symbolizes the search for your destiny and your vocation.

To see the great man means that having a mentor would be very useful at this stage; but it also indicates that you should rise spiritually and in understanding.

**Career:** You will have good opportunities to advance, provided that you get support from your superiors.

**Private life:** Your good conduct and reputation will gain you the respect of other people and will help you to advance successfully.

**Health, Feelings and Social life:** Good health. Excellent moment for establishing relations with other people.

## Third Nine

The noble is active throughout the day.

At night he is cautious, as if in danger.

No defect.

You will be creatively active all day long. Enduring strength and alertness will keep you out of trouble.

A wide scope of opportunities will spread before you along with your reputation.

Do not procrastinate nor allow others to influence you improperly. You will have to marshal wisely your resources to keep pace with your responsibilities.

**Career:** You will have many duties and concerns, but if you are cautious enough you will not make any mistakes.

**Private life:** You will need all your strength to handle your obligations. Be very careful to avoid complications with other people.

**Health, Feelings and Social life:** Excellent health, but sometimes you will feel stressed out.

### Fourth Nine

Hesitates before jumping over the chasm.

No defect.

You will test your capability for success, deciding your future.

The choice is yours; you can ascend and play an important role in the world, gaining fame and power or stay low and dedicate yourself to personal matters.

**Career:** A decision must be made between different opportunities. You may have to wait for a time and make some trial runs before deciding what you will do.

**Private life:** This is a period of transition. You will have some hesitation until you find which path you will take.

**Health, Feelings and Social life:** Be open to new experiences. If you are sincere, confusion will fade away and you will know which is your true path in life.

### Fifth Nine

Dragon flying in the sky.

It is favorable to see the great man.

To fly in the sky means to have reached a high position in the place where you belong, because the sky is the natural world of the dragon.

The sky is the highest sphere where only dragons, that is to say, the most capable and creative persons can abide.

The flying dragon symbolizes a great person at work, having great influence and being an example for other people. The flying dragon also indicates that you can advance freely and achieve lofty goals with ease.

To see the great man means that still after having reached such a high place, having a guide would be very useful.

**Career:** Great success and fast progress. You will be widely recognized and respected.

**Private life:** Your desires will be fulfilled and you will be very successful.

**Health, Feelings and Social life:** Excellent health. Enlightenment and far reaching thoughts and influence over other people.

## Top Nine

Arrogant dragon.

There will be occasion for repentance.

If you go too far in your ambition you will lose contact with the real world and will get lost.

Arrogance will sever your links with other people and when you most need them you will not get any help.

If you recognize your limits and do not forget other people you may still prevent trouble.

**Career:** It may be a good time to retire or fall back. If you push too far you will have heavy losses.

**Private life:** Your obstinacy will isolate and get you into a lot of trouble.

**Health, Feelings and Social life:** Your health will suffer if you ask too much of your body. Egocentric views will let you without friends.

## All lines are Nine<sup>2</sup>

A group of dragons without heads.

Auspicious.

Each dragon is strong; a group of dragons is a powerful force that hardly can be stopped.

To be without heads means that the dragons act by common accord, without having a chief among them.<sup>3</sup>

When all lines mutate **The Creative** changes into the hexagram **2: The Receptive**. By combining the strength of **The Creative** with the devotion of the **The Receptive** you will achieve a perfect bal-

## 1 - The Creative / Activity /Dynamic Force

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ance and will be able to handle any situation easily, hence the prospects will be entirely good.

**Career:** You are part of team of distinguished individuals, working in good harmony.

**Private life:** Good time for cooperating with family and friends. Shared creative participation will be very favorable.

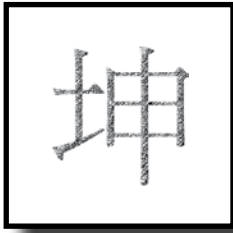
**Health, Feelings and Social life:** Excellent health and very good social interaction.

### Notes

1. Only the first two hexagrams, **The Creative** and **The Receptive** have an additional line statement, to be read when all lines mutate.

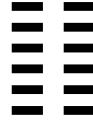
2. See Note 1.

3. Notice that the Chinese character translated as “heads” also means “leader, chief”. Hence the dragons are leaderless, they act in perfect accord.



*kūn*

## The Receptive



The Chinese character constituents for this hexagram tag are: *shēn*, “stretch”, and *tǔ*, “earth”: expanse of earth.

This is one of the eight hexagrams that are comprised by the same trigram repeated twice, in this case ☷☷, *The Receptive*.

Please see **The Eight Trigrams**, in the page 359 for more information about ☷☷.

### Associated meanings

Earth, nature; receptiveness, responsiveness, compliance, acquiescence, docility, devotion, subordinate; matter, field, spatial extension; feminine, nurturing, mother, *yin* force.

### Judgment

The Receptive.

Outstanding success favorable for the determination of a mare.<sup>1</sup>

If the noble takes the lead he goes astray,  
but if he follows, he finds a master.

It is favorable to find friends in the west and south;  
avoid friends in the east and north.<sup>2</sup>

A quiet determination is auspicious.

A mare is strong but docile. Hence, do not try to impose your will but follow someone's example or guide.

You are part of a group or team and you should work for the good of the whole, not just for your own personal gain or benefit.

If you have employment, it would be best for you to progress inside the place where you are working instead trying to go ahead on your own. If you are part of a family, be loyal with them and do you share of the work for the sake of your family.

South-west means going towards other people and to work with them, north-east indicates advancing in solitude.<sup>3</sup>

Going with friends signifies to surrender to a community-sense work, where solidarity and cooperation are involved.

Quiet determination means that you should do what is required from you and persevere with steadfast and calm resolve.

This is one of the few hexagrams that mention the “four cardinal virtues”: **yuan**: outstanding (fundamentality, primal, originating, spring season, head, sublime, great, grand); **heng**: success (prevalence, growing, penetrating, treat, offering, sacrifice); **li**: determination (perseverance, constancy, correct and firm) and **heng**: favorable (advantageous, suitable, beneficial, lucky). One or more of the cardinal virtues appear in 50 different hexagrams, but only the hexagrams 1, 2 (with some modification), 3, 17, 19, 25 and 49 have the four virtues in its *Judgment*. Since the *Han* Dynasty onwards they have become keywords of Confucian thought, four qualities or virtues applicable both to Heaven and to the noble-minded person.

Any oracle encompassing the four cardinal virtues indicates that success is granted, but only if you don't stray from the good; for this reason determination in the right way is the key to success.

### The Image

The earth condition is receptive obedience.

Thus the noble, who has a munificent character, sustains all living creatures.

Like the earth nurtures all beings, the virtuous person will be generous and tolerating, helping and guiding all living beings.

Be open-minded and compassionate to the needs of other persons.

Do your duty for the sake of others more than for your own advancement.

## First Six

Walking on hoarfrost one reaches hard ice.

Walking on hoarfrost has several connotations:

1. The coming winter; signs of decay.
2. An approaching marriage. Two *ShiJing*<sup>4</sup> odes use the same characters with that meaning.
3. Ceremonial walking on hoarfrost for the autumnal sacrifices.

The first meaning is the more common interpretation, here walking on hoarfrost indicates that danger is coming and good conditions are coming to an end, because the hard and cold winter is approaching. Be alert for signs of trouble and do not let matters slip out of hand.

Also the reference to hard ice may indicate that your advance will be stopped cold soon.

**Career:** The period of easy advancing is coming to an end. Be alert to plots against you. An alliance may help you.

**Private life:** Trouble is brewing. The path that you follow may be more slippery than you expect. Do not be ingenuous or care free, but take precautions.

**Health, Feelings and Social life:** You may have trouble with your feet or mobility issues.

## Second Six

Right, square and large, inexperienced.

But nothing will be not favorable.

The square is a symbol of earth. An alternative translation would be: “honorable, straightforward and extensive, without practice”. In any case the line means that by being correct and strong you can make all things flourish easily.

Be sincere and follow your instincts, you will do the right thing.

**Career:** Your natural qualities will make you prosper in your trade.

**Private life:** Be open to life and accept what happens with ease. Your good nature will assure success.

**Health, Feelings and Social life:** Good health and an open heart will make you happy.

### Third Six

Hidden brilliance.

The determination is suitable.

If you are in the service of a king you will not have achievements,  
but will carry to conclusion.

Concentrate your efforts in your duty and do not seek distinctions  
for yourself.

Your talents will be rewarded when the time is ripe, for now it is best  
to focus in servicing others.

If you are not independent but work for somebody, you will do a  
good job, but you will not get any credit for it at the present time.

**Career:** You will not have immediate success but will achieve your  
ends in the long run, provided that you handle matters with modesty  
and perseverance.

**Private life:** Stay in the background, you will prosper in an unassum-  
ing way, possibly working from home.

**Health, Feelings and Social life:** Be modest and discreet. People  
will appreciate you more if you do not outshine them.

### Fourth Six

A tied up bag.

No defect, no praise.

Keep your opinions and plans private. Do not draw attention to  
yourself.

Caution is advised, do not commit, keep your neutrality and distance  
until the situation clears.

**Career:** You have reached an impasse. Because there is trouble  
ahead, stay in your place, be prudent and do not take sides.

**Private life:** The situations is stationary, you will neither gain nor  
lose. Discretion and prudence will keep you safe.

**Health, Feelings and Social life:** You are something of a recluse,  
but your reserve will save you from trouble. Time for resting.

### Fifth Six

Yellow lower garment.

There will be outstanding happiness.

Yellow is the color of the earth and indicates moderation and follow-  
ing the middle path between the extremes.

Also, the yellow lower garment<sup>5</sup> symbolizes humility and virtue in somebody that occupies a place of honor (the fifth line is the ruler's place).

If you are sincere but polite, people will respond well to you sensible approach.

**Career:** Your ability to handle matters smoothly and with modesty will help you to progress greatly.

**Private life:** Moderation and tact will make your life flourish.

**Health, Feelings and Social life:** Excellent health and very good social life.

### Top Six

Dragons fight in the open country.

Their blood is black and yellow.

The *yin* principle is the complement of the *yang* force, but it should be subservient and do not take the lead.

Here a mad fight between the two forces, the true *yang* dragon and the rebel *yin* false dragon<sup>6</sup> will cause calamity.

An unpleasant and violent competition for power will only cause misery for both sides. Be cooperative, not competitive.

**Career:** Power struggles should be avoided, because they will damage everybody involved and may make you to lose your position.

**Private life:** Conflict and fights will cause many troubles and losses.

**Health, Feelings and Social life:** Envy and intransigence may destroy your happiness.

### All lines are Six<sup>7</sup>

Long term determination is favorable.

Final success will be achieved through the practice of constant determination.

You are doing things just fine, keep in the same line and you will have lasting success.

**Career:** Be loyal to your commitments and plans.

**Private life:** Firmness of purpose and allegiance to your principles will be advantageous.

**Health, Feelings and Social life:** Good health and dedication to a cause will keep you engaged socially.

## 2 - The Receptive

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### Notes

1. Here the determination (*li*) is defined as the determination of a mare.
2. South-west means retreating and north-east means advancing, because the *Zhou* dynasty has his home grounds to the south-west of the *Shang*—the previous dynasty deposed by them—capital city. Also the south is associated with community work and summer and the north with reporting to a master and the dark and cold winter.
3. See Note 2.
4. *Shijing* is the oldest existent collection of Chinese poetry and its odes come from the same historic period when the nucleus of the *Yijing (I Ching)* was composed.
5. Other alternative translations for *garment* are *skirt* or *apron*, ceremonial garments used by people of rank. Yellow is the color of the emperor.
6. Black is the color of heaven and yellow is the color of the earth, they identify the true and false dragons.
7. Only the first two hexagrams, **The Creative** and **The Receptive** have an additional line statement, to be read when all lines change.



*zhūn*

## Initial Difficulty



The ancient Chinese character for this hexagram tag depicts a germinating plant coming to light through the surface of the earth. The plant must go through obstacles and establish a presence in a place full of potential dangers, hence the idea of initial difficulty.

### Associated meanings

Difficult; to sprout, begin to grow; leadership; assemble, accumulate, hoard; to garrison soldiers, massed, bunched.

### Judgment

The Initial Difficulty.

Outstanding success.

The determination is favorable.

It should not be pursued any goal.

It is favorable to appoint officials.

In the first stages of growth, immature beings and new ventures need nurturing, care and firm determination.

This is the right moment to set the basis of future developments, to affirm the innate potential, as the root must be steady into the soil before sprouting. The situation is unstable and the task couldn't be done without the help of collaborators. Goals cannot be attained until some order and development is achieved. That means that long term planning is required.

This is one of the few hexagrams that mention the “four cardinal virtues”: **yuan**: outstanding (fundamentality, primal, originating, spring season, head, sublime, great, grand); **heng**: success (prevalence, growing, penetrating, treat, offering, sacrifice); **li**: determination (perseverance, constancy, correct and firm) and **heng**: favorable (advantageous, suitable, beneficial, lucky). One or more of the cardinal virtues appear in 50 different hexagrams, but only the hexagrams 1, 2 (with some modification), 3, 17, 19, 25 and 49 have the four virtues in its *Judgment*. Since the *Han* Dynasty onwards they have become keywords of Confucian thought, four qualities or virtues applicable both to Heaven and to the noble-minded person.

Any oracle encompassing the four cardinal virtues indicates that success is granted, but only if you don't stray from the good; for this reason determination in the right way is the key to success.

#### The Image

Clouds and thunder: The image of the Initial Difficulty.

Thus the noble sorts the threads of warp and woof.

The competent person should order and classify things in order to convert potential capabilities into a real force.

Clouds and thunder is a reference to the two constituent's trigrams which depict a situation with plenty of possibilities but also in a chaotic state. To sort the threads of warp and woof is a metaphor for the act of government.

Resolute leadership is a required to order the situation and achieve final success.

#### First Nine

Looking to overcome an obstacle.

It is favorable to maintain the determination.

It is favorable to appoint assistants.

It may be necessary to try different approaches before being able to surpass an obstacle; hence some hesitation will be unavoidable, but the final goals should not be forgotten.

By recognizing the merits of subordinates and making them feel useful, you can get help from them and organize support for further expansion.

**Career:** Good moment to assemble a team, to push forward and to set the rules of the game.

**Private life:** Time to take the reins and offer guidance to friends or family. Do not let others make you doubt yourself and do not deviate from your own rules.

**Health, Feelings and Social life:** Some mobility problems in feet. Irresolution.

## Second Six

Difficulties impeding progress.

Horse and cart separate.

It's not a villain, but a pretender.

The girl has determination and does not plight her troth.

After ten years she will pledge herself.

The horse separated from the cart symbolizes the difficulty in making cooperative efforts work.

An obstacle still impedes the advance and some misunderstandings are complicating the teamwork.

Somebody will provide help from an unexpected quarter. The newcomer will not be appreciated at a first glance, you may hesitate, waiting for the right moment before taking on any obligations or compromise your will.

The Chinese characters translated as “plight” also means “conceive”, “breed”, indicating a fruitful alliance at the end.

Ten years indicates a long period, like in the hexagrams 24.5 and 27.3.

**Career:** Establishing an alliance or a good team will take some time, but its advantages will make worthwhile the delay and effort spent in building it. Good long term prospects.

**Private life:** After some hardship, conflicts and doubts a marriage or a firm friendship will be achieved. Possible birth in the family.

**Health, Feelings and Social life:** Mobility troubles. Distrust, irresolution.

## Third Six

Chasing the deer without forester, entering in the depths of the forest.

The noble sees the signs and desists.

If he went forward, he would regret it.

Blinded by your desire, you may advance in dangerous and unknown ground without taking the proper precautions or lacking a good

guide. The deer represents the desire; the forest symbolizes the unknown and the dangers ahead where you may be taken by your ambition. The signs are subtle indications that –if disregarded– will lead you amiss.

**Career:** Lack of planning and foresight will lead you to failure and humiliation. Restrain and prudence is advised.

**Private life:** The heart forges ahead chasing its own unattainable dreams. The awakening will be painful.

**Health, Feelings and Social life:** Feelings of being lost or disconnected from others. Obsession.

#### Fourth Six

Horse and cart separate.

Look for the union.

Advance brings happiness.

Everything will be auspicious and without blemish.

The forces at your disposal are scattered and discordant. The cart symbolizes a project that cannot advance forward for lack of union.

You are not qualified to solve the problems by yourself, getting an ally is the only way to resume your advance and carry out things to a successful end.

**Career:** Associating with other people or becoming part of a group is the best way to achieve good results. Good prospects for teamwork.

**Private life:** Recognizing that you cannot do everything by yourself and looking for help in friends or family will make your life more agreeable and prosperous.

**Health, Feelings and Social life:** Indecision, hesitation.

#### Fifth Nine

Difficulties dispensing favors.

Determination in small matters is auspicious.

Determination in major ways brings misfortune.

Preserve your energy, wait for a more propitious time. For now only small things can be done successfully. Big achievements will fail.

You will not be able to help others in any significant way.

**Career:** It is advantageous to focus in small matters with care. Ambitious projects will fail. Inversions will be unsuccessful.

**Private life:** It is a difficult time for helping others. You will not be able to solve the problems of your friends or family, and will only bring misfortune on yourself if you get entangled in trouble. Only small things can be achieved.

**Health, Feelings and Social life:** Feelings of inadequacy towards others. Insecurity.

### Top Nine

Horse and cart separate.

Tears of blood are spilled.

Blood tears represent an exaggerated attitude; more stressful in the lament than what really corresponds. You have gone too far and now you are mired in difficulties.

There are no helpers and no suitable place for moving, but remaining in your current position will not be good at all.

If you yield to reality and give up you will be able to start anew.

**Career:** You cannot neither advance nor hold to your current position. Accept your losses and start again from the beginning.

**Private life:** You may lose your property or a member of your family.

**Health, Feelings and Social life:** Chronic depression. Obsession and despair.

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*méng*

## Youthful Folly



The phonetic element for this hexagram tag means “to cover with grass, hide”, hence the meaning of being in darkness. Removing false concepts and foolish illusions is part of the work of growing; hence, another idea is that one should see reality like it is before learning how to deal with it.

Notice that some authors translate *méng* as dodder, a parasitic plant.

### Associated Meanings

Ignorance, immaturity, inexperience; cover, hidden, in darkness; go with covered eyes against; deception, conceal, cheat.

### Judgment

The Youthful Folly is successful.

It is not I who seek the young fool, the young fool seeks me.

At the first oracle I inform, but a second or third time is troublesome;  
and I do not instruct the annoying.

The determination is favorable.

Immaturity is a learning stage. A young fool can be successful; because the close contact with experience will help him to acquire some wisdom. Also, the process of learning should be taken care showing respect to the master; otherwise the teacher's effort will be wasted. Unruly students will bring humiliation over themselves.

The Oracle speaks here, telling the people who seek its advice to take seriously its instruction and to avoid asking about the same question again and again. In such case they would just waste their time.

### The Image

Under the mountain flows a spring: The image of the Youthful Folly.  
Thus the noble makes his actions resolute and cultivates his virtue.

The mountain is strong, consolidated, but the spring flowing out of it runs in search of the formation of its own course. The spring runs the risk of stagnation, as when the youthful inexperience takes the wrong road, delaying the maturation process.

To cultivate one's virtue means to develop the own strong points or natural gifts. That is the way to success.

### First Six

To develop the foolish man it will be favorable to discipline him.

The fetters must be removed,  
otherwise there will be regret.

Discipline is good for strengthening the will, but it shouldn't be carried too far. If the restrains (symbolized by the fetters) are excessive they will sap the student creativity and good will. After all, discipline is an excellent tool but not a goal in itself.

**Career:** Clear rules should be enforced, but not to the point of hindering efficiency or dampening creativity.

**Private life:** Some quarrels. Family rules should be applied wisely, not blindly.

**Health, Feelings and Social life:** Weak or impeded feet. Exercises will strengthen mobility.

### Second Nine

Supporting the Youthful Folly is auspicious.

To take a wife is auspicious.

A son can take care of the family.

The student weakness should be tolerated. Expecting too much and too soon from people that are starting to learn is not a realistic expectation.

The wife is here a symbol of weakness, to be able to take one indicates a kindly and considerate attitude, how a stronger being can manage a relation with a weaker one.

The pupil that is educated with kindness, in turn will be able to take care of his own family in the same way.

**Career:** Good moment for taking more responsibilities and accepting subordinate partners.

**Private life:** You may take responsibility over other people or perhaps even marry.

**Health, Feelings and Social life:** New drive. High levels of energy and mobility.

### Third Six

Do not marry a girl who, on seeing a man of metal,  
loses her self-possession.  
No place is favorable.

This line describes how a weaker person can lose his will and blindly imitate or follow a stronger person as a role model. It is no right to allow other person to follow you in such a slavish way. That kind of situation doesn't lead to success or to a sustainable relation.

Also, sometimes a weaker person can relate to a stronger or richer person only with the idea of getting selfish advantages. In such case nothing good will come of such relationship.

**Career:** Do not trust people that follow you blindly, keep your independence of action at all costs. Do not fawn over your superiors.

**Private life:** Do not be servile; maintain your self-respect. Do not encourage others to be dependent from you.

**Health, Feelings and Social life:** Emotional disturbances may affect stomach and bowels.

### Fourth Six

Trapped by his folly he will suffer shame.

A fool who is not ready to give up his foolish ways and is too proud to change, will arrive to a dead end, losing touch with reality and becoming trapped in his own fantasies. No other outcome than shame is possible.

**Career:** Impasse and humiliation due to lack of imagination and stubborn adherence to impractical ways.

**Private life:** Do not close yourself to reality; be open new ways for doing things. Be ready to adapt and learn.

**Health, Feelings and Social life:** Back problems. Trouble with the upper limbs. Feelings of inadequacy.

### Fifth Six

Children's folly is auspicious.

Being flexible, willing to learn and accepting guidance will be favorable.

An open-minded person knows his limitations and where to look for help. This describes the exact inverse situation of the previous line.

**Career:** Delegating responsibilities in trustworthy and knowledgeable people will complement well your weak points. Do not hesitate in asking advice.

**Private life:** Being open to friends and family and willing to follow good counsel will be favorable. Recognizing your own limitations and asking for help will be positive.

**Health, Feelings and Social life:** Good emotional balance. Happiness.

### Top Nine

Punishing Youthful Folly.

It is not favorable to commit harassment,  
but it is favorable to defend yourself against transgressors.

When a fool is stubborn he may require punishment, but only to the point that is required to stop his bad behavior. The amount of punishment depends on the person; in some cases a light punishment may be enough in some cases stronger punishments may be more appropriate.

Punishment is the last resort and should not be applied as revenge or in anger.

The Chinese word translated as "harassment" and "transgressors", literally means "bandit, invader, enemy, robber, violent people, outcasts, plunderers".

**Career:** Leaders should know when and how to apply punishment, not only to protect themselves but to make people follow the proper rules. You may have to go to court or press charges against somebody.

**Private life:** Some people will not stop taking advantage of you until they are stopped forcefully, strong words or acts may be required. Conflicts should be temporary, not a perpetual feud. Be alert against robbers.

**Health, Feelings and Social life:** Depression, self-reproach.



*xū*

Waiting



The original meaning of this hexagram's tag is "stopped by rain, waiting it out". The meaning "to need" was added long after the *Yijing* was written.

### Associated Meanings

Wait, tarry, stop; get wet; serve.

### Judgment

Waiting.

With brilliance and sincerity you will succeed.

The determination is favorable.

It is favorable to cross the great river.

Waiting is not the same than giving up. Having clarity of purpose one can wait patiently, looking carefully at the situation to see when the right moment for advance comes.

In ancient China, crossing rivers, either at a ford or when the river was frozen, was not an easy task. It implicated dangers and hardships; hence crossing the great river means to carry out a difficult undertaking.

### The Image

Clouds ascend to heaven: The image of Waiting.

Thus the noble drinks, eats and parties.

Clouds gathering in the sky symbolize a process or situation that is evolving slowly. The conclusion of that process will be rain, which also indicates the liberation of the stress.

To drink eat and party means to be at ease and to have a good and optimist state of mind. The waiting time can be enjoyed, and normal live must go on without being put on hold until your goals are attained.

Nourish yourself and keep in touch with other people while you wait.

### First Nine

Waiting in the suburbs.

It is favorable to have perseverance.

No defect.

Your life is still undisturbed and nothing unusual happens yet.

If you stay away from danger and remain committed to your daily chores you will have no trouble.

**Career:** Continue with your business as usual. Neither news nor challenges will disturb your work.

**Private life:** Peaceful time. Quiet country life.

**Health, Feelings and Social life:** Good health and contentment, although you may feel a bit isolated.

### Second Nine

Waiting in the sand.

They say little things.

Finally there will be good fortune.

Waiting in the sandbank, near the river means that you are about to cross the river. Crossing a river symbolizes undertaking a dangerous enterprise. Some people may not understand your goals or do not trust your capability to perform them, but their gossip will have no importance. In time you will carry out your goal successfully.

**Career:** You are waiting on a threshold, about to start some important project. Since you are now in the open, people can see what you are looking for. Keep you focus in the final goal and don't mind the critics.

**Private life:** This is a transitional time. Your life is about to change and some friends or family, who cannot understand you, will criticize your moves.

**Health, Feelings and Social life:** Some anxiety and big expectations.

### Third Nine

Waiting in the mud attracts bandits.

You advanced too far and too soon and now you are in a vulnerable position. You are in danger of being attacked or slandered.

The way out of the bad actual situations is not clear; you are obstructed for the time being. Utter prudence and circumspection are advised.

**Career:** Your career is obstructed temporarily and there is danger of demotion. Some bad people may try to take unfair advantage of you.

**Private life:** Rushing things led you to trouble. Be careful, you are isolated, and in danger of being robbed. Do not take things at face value.

**Health, Feelings and Social life:** Insecurity, alienation. Digestive and sexual problems.

### Fourth Six

Waiting in blood.

Outside the pit!

To be in a bloody pit means that you have fallen in a trap or are in a critical situation. Rushing things only will worsen your problems. Keep your head cool, let things take its course and wait until you can see clearly a way out.

**Career:** Your position or career is in danger. Maintain your composure; do not let yourself to be dragged into further troubles. Stay calm and quiet until the situation resolves by itself.

**Private life:** Try to shun any confrontation with other people and avoid violence at all costs. Any movement may increase the danger.

**Health, Feelings and Social life:** Danger of injury. Possible hospitalization and surgery.

### Fifth Nine

Waiting with wine and food.

The determination is favorable.

Waiting in the middle of abundance, you can replenish your strength and enjoy the current moment. You are at the proper place, enjoy it while you can.

**Career:** Time of peace and relaxation with good prospects for advancement.

**Private life:** A quiet, relaxed and fruitful moment.

**Health, Feelings and Social life:** Happiness and contentment.

### Top Six

One falls into the pit.

Three uninvited guests arrive.

Treat them with respect and in the end there will be good fortune.

The character translated as “pit” here (and also in the fourth line) in addition means “cave, hole, underground dwellings”. It indicates that you are trapped in darkness, you cannot see the way out and there is no hope left.

The three uninvited guest indicate new persons, ideas or influences that will change entirely and unexpectedly the situation for good.

If you treat the unexpected guests in the proper way, you will gain insight and will be able to come out of the pit.

**Career:** New opportunities and may be a new post or new responsibilities will renovate your career.

**Private life:** It is a good time to accept new people and ideas in your life. Only in that way you will overcome your troubles.

**Health, Feelings and Social life:** Unexpected recovery of health and happiness, but only if you are open to change.



*sòng*

**Conflict / Lawsuit**



The original meaning of the hexagram's tag is "words" and "public dispute".

### **Associated Meanings**

Conflict, litigation, dispute, quarrel, to demand justice, accusation, arguing, grievance.

### **Judgment**

Conflict.

You are sincere but you are hold back.

Cautiously stopped halfway brings good fortune.

Going to the end is ominous.

It is advantageous to see the great man.

It is not favorable to cross the great river.

To win the conflict, righteousness it not enough and no matter if you win, the costs may be higher than the advantages.

The Judgment suggests stopping halfway; that means to find a middle ground where both litigants can agree.

The great man is a mediator that can help both sides to find a peaceful solution.

The fact that it is not favorable to cross the great river indicates that to take the conflict ahead is not convenient. Going to the end –not reaching a compromise– would be disastrous; there is danger of a never ending conflict that will drag you down for a long time.

This hexagram is related with civil lawsuits, the other hexagram with a similar meaning is the number 21: *Biting through*, which indicates a criminal lawsuit.

### The Image

Sky and water move in opposite directions: The image of the Conflict. Thus the noble, in all his tasks, plans well before starting.

The sky is located far above the waters, and water always goes down; this symbolizes two parties –litigants– with opposite goals and perspectives.

In order to prevent conflicts it is necessary to plan ahead and to delimitate clearly the responsibilities and duties of every involved person. Stating your position clearly at the beginning, also will minimize the danger of any future confrontations.

### First Six

If one does not perpetuate the affair, there will be some gossip, but eventually it will be auspicious.

This is the initial stage of the conflict where it is still feasible to stop it without negative effects. At this point it would be easy to find mutual understanding with minimal discussions and without losing face.

**Career:** When divergences arose, do not delay in reaching an accord, before the matter goes out of hand. The more people get involved the more difficult will be to fix the situation.

**Private life:** Making some minor concessions now will save you a lot of trouble in the long run.

**Health, Feelings and Social life:** Bad habits should be napped in the bud, before they can cause harm. Be tolerant and yielding with aggressive people.

### Second Nine

One cannot succeed in the suit and escapes back to his home. The inhabitants of his city, three hundred families will not suffer misfortune.<sup>1</sup>

Confronted with a superior power the only reasonable action is to go back to a safe position. A conflict can expand towards the surroundings and it may harm people that are not only directly related

to it, hence a prompt retreat will secure the safety of your friends and associates.

Returning home also indicates to take a low profile approach.

**Career:** Stepping back to a secure position is the best strategic decision. There is danger of losing it all if the conflict is left unchecked.

**Private life:** Renouncing to a fight that you cannot win is the only way to secure the future of your family.

**Health, Feelings and Social life:** Without moderation and restraint your health will be compromised. Avoid getting involved in conflicts with other people.

### Third Six

Subsisting on old virtue.

Determination in front of danger.

There will be good fortune in the end.

If you are in the service of a king  
you will not be able to complete your work.

The traditional ways are the safest option, especially when confronting powerful contenders.

This is not the right time to improve or change anything; the situation cannot be improved yet but it can be sustained. Steady but traditional work will achieve the best results in the end.

Behave with restraint and modesty to avoid attracting unwanted attention.

**Career:** Complying to the letter with your obligations without trying to improve your orders would be the best way to keep your position. Some projects may be stopped or postponed.

**Private life:** For now it would be best to keep to true and tested customs without changing your lifestyle.

**Health, Feelings and Social life:** This is not the proper time to try new medications or to change anything in your health-care treatments.

### Fourth Nine

One cannot win the fight.

Turns back and accepts fate.

Changes his attitude and finds peace.

The determination is auspicious.

When the right is not on your side, the correct thing to do is to resign and go back.

Accepting fate and resigning your ambitions will bring peace. It is auspicious to act that way.

**Career:** Faced with a weaker opponent you will find that the best way is to accept things as they are and to not seek further advantages by the exercise of raw power.

**Private life:** Listen to your conscience and accept reality, do not try to force other people to do things your way.

**Health, Feelings and Social life:** Reducing the stress and ambitions in your life will improve your health. Be cooperative and adaptable instead trying to impose your will.

### Fifth Nine

Litigating.

Outstanding fortune.

The fifth line is the ruler of the hexagram and it symbolizes a just arbiter.

To resolve the conflict in a fair way you should recourse to a just person in position of authority.

It is important not only to search for a proper mediator but to take the right course towards the desired goal.

Justice will be done. If you are in the right you will be highly successful.

**Career:** A successful solution of the conflict will lead to promotion or good business opportunities.

**Private life:** Seek help from a third party to solve any conflicts or grievances.

**Health, Feelings and Social life:** Moderation in your desires and behavior will make you happier and healthier.

### Top Nine

If you get rewarded with a leather belt,  
by late morning it will have been snatched away three times.

The leather belt is a symbol of rank and authority.

To lose it several times means that the victory will not be sustainable, that the conflict will never end.

**Career:** Your triumph will be short lived and it will have to be kept through continual strife.

**Private life:** The price of victory will be constant disputes and your position will never be secure.

**Health, Feelings and Social life:** Recurring health issues caused by a stressful situation.

## Notes

1. Presumably the man who lost the litigation should have to pay a fine or commute a harsh penalty by payment. His vassals –the inhabitants of his city– would be forced to pay the fine for his feudal lord, hence if the lord retreats before losing his case they would suffer no harm. Another interpretation is that the conflict was between the lord and his vassals, and that the inhabitants of the city do not suffer misfortune because they won the dispute.

The hexagrams 7 to 64 only are present  
in the printed book.



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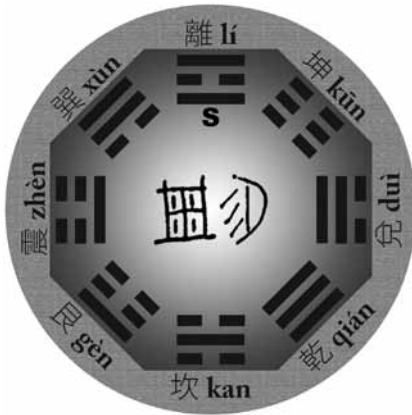
## The Eight Trigrams

Each hexagram can be divided into two trigrams, which are groups of three consecutive lines, including either the lower or the upper three lines. There are only eight trigrams, which are called *ba gua*, (*ba* means eight) because there are only eight ways to combine broken and whole lines in groups of three.

Although tradition tells us that trigrams precede hexagrams, there is no proof of that. They may have been abstracted from the hexagrams something between the creation of the *Zhouyi* text (comprising The Judgment and the lines) and the composition of the Ten Wings, which mention the trigrams (the *Yijing* was known as *Zhouyi* before the Ten Wings were attached to it).

The names of the eight trigrams refer to the natural elements: *Qian* (Heaven), *Kun* (Earth), *Zhen* (Thunder), *Kan* (Water), *Gen* (Mountain), *Xun* (Wind or Wood), *Li* (Fire) and *Dui* (Lake).

It is important to understand the symbolic meanings of each trigram, and how they relate to each other to comprehend better the main idea and the text of *The Image* in the hexagrams.



The picture at the left shows the arrangement of the trigrams in the Inner-World (Later Heaven), arrangement, which is traditionally attributed to king *Wen*, and is the one used in the Eight Wing, *ShuoGua*, which also provides most of the meanings for the trigrams.

The South is at the top, following the traditional Chinese style. The two oracle bones characters in the middle read *Zhouyi*.

THE CREATIVE /  
THE HEAVEN

---



Heaven symbolizes strength and is the beginning of all things.

*Related trigram:* ☶, the mother.

*Action:* Rules.

*Pronunciation:* qián.

*Natural symbol:* Heaven.

*Member of the family:* The father.

*Body part:* The head.

*Animals:* A good horse, an old horse, a thin horse, a wild horse, a piebald horse.

*Season:* Autumn.

*Color:* Deep red.

*Cardinal points:* North-West.

*Other associations:* A circle; a ruler, a prince; strength, hardness; strong movement, tireless work; jade; metal; cold; ice; the fruits from trees.

God strives in ☰. It means that Yang and Yin interact, stimulating each other.

---

THE RECEPTIVE /  
THE EARTH

---



Earth symbolizes gentleness and nourishes all beings.

*Related trigram:* ☰, the father.

*Action:* Serves, nourishes.

*Pronunciation:* kūn.

*Natural symbol:* Earth, black soil.

*Member of the family:* The mother.

*Body part:* The belly.

*Animal:* Cow and calf; a heifer; a young mare.

*Season:* Summer.

*Color:* Yellow.

*Cardinal points:* South-West.

*Other associations:* Cloth, a kettle, parsimony, a turning lathe, a large wagon, variegated things, a multitude, quantity, a handle and support; frugality, thrift, passionate delivery, devotion, protection, selflessness, generosity, gentleness, ductility, the number 10.

God is served in ☷.

---

THE AROUSING /  
THE THUNDER

---



The Thunder symbolizes movement and speed.

*Related trigram:* ☴, the eldest daughter, Wind, because Thunder and Wind do not hinder one another, but they excite each other.

*Action:* Arouses, shakes, stirs, put the things in movement.

*Pronunciation:* zhèn.

*Natural symbol:* The thunder, wood.

*Member of the family:* The eldest son.

*Body part:* The feet, because they serve for movement.

*Animal:* The dragon; horses that neigh well, have white hind legs, are sprightly, or have a white star on the forehead.

*Season and time:* Spring, dawn.

*Color:* Dark yellow; violet blue and yellow; dark and pale.

*Cardinal point:* East.

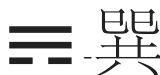
*Other associations:* Development; a great highway; vehement decisions; green bamboo shoots; reeds and rushes; in respect to cultivated plants it is those that grows back to life from its disappearance (like legumes); what in the end becomes the strongest and most luxuriant.

God comes forth in ☳.

---

THE GENTLE / THE WIND

---



The Wind symbolizes penetration.

*Related trigram:* ☳, the eldest son, Thunder, because Wind and Thunder do not hinder one another, but they excite each other.

*Action:* Scatters (the seeds of) the things.

*Pronunciation:* xùn.

*Natural symbol:* The wind, wood.

*Member of the family:* The eldest daughter.

*Body part:* The thighs; deficiency of hair; broad forehead; much white in the eye; crooked eyes.

*Animal:* The cock, fowl.

*Season:* Spring.

*Color:* White.

## The Eight Trigrams

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*Cardinal points:* South-East.

*Other associations:* Firewood; a plumb line; a carpenter's square; long; lofty; advancing and receding; unresolved; strong scents; the close pursuit of gain, those who get nearly threefold in profit; work, business; a fair; a ten days cycle; at the end point of its development it becomes *Zhen* (The Thunder).

God sets all things in order in ☵.

---

### THE ABYSMAL / THE WATER

---



The Water is the symbol of what is precipitous and perilous.

*Related trigram:* ☲ the middle daughter, Fire, because Water and Fire do not fail to complement each other.

*Action:* Moistens.

*Pronunciation:* kǎn.

*Natural symbol:* Water, clouds, river, Moon.

*Member of the family:* The middle son.

*Body part:* The ears.

*Animals:* Pig; fox; horses with beautiful backs, with high spirit, with a drooping head, with thin hooves, who shamble along.

*Season:* Winter.

*Color:* Red.

*Cardinal point:* North.

*Other associations:* Channels and ditches; lying hidden or concealed; bending and straightening; a bow, a wheel; anxiety, distress of mind; pain in the ears; blood; chariots that have many risks and damages; penetration; a thief; trees strong and sound-hearted.

God toils in ☵.

---

### THE CLINGING / THE FIRE

---



The Fire is the symbol of what is bright and what is catching.

*Related trigram:* ☵, the middle son, Water, because Fire and Water do not fail to complement each other.

*Action:* Warms and dries.

*Pronunciation:* lì.

*Natural symbol:* The Sun, fire, lightning.

*Member of the family:* The middle daughter.

*Body part:* The eyes.

*Animals:* Pheasant, cow, turtle, crab, clam, snail.

*Season:* Summer.

*Cardinal points:* South.

*Other associations:* Armor and helmet; spear and sword; men with large bellies; it is the trigram of dryness; trees that are hollow and rotten above; clarity, discernment, clear perception.

God causes creatures to perceive one another in ☲.

---

### KEEPING STILL / THE MOUNTAIN

---



The Mountain is the symbol of stoppage or arrest.

*Related trigram:* ☲, the youngest daughter, with whom it combines its force.

*Action:* Stops things, keep things in its place.

*Pronunciation:* gèn.

*Natural symbol:* The Mountain.

*Member of the family:* The youngest son.

*Body part:* The hands, the fingers, the annular finger, the nose.

*Animals:* Dog, rodents, panther, birds with a strong beak.

*Season:* Winter.

*Cardinal points:* South-East.

*Other associations:* Side roads; small rocks; doorways; tree and vine fruits; gate-keeper, porter, eunuch, palace guard; strong and gnarled trees; firm rules, rest; end and beginning.

God brings things to perfection in ☲.

---

### THE JOYOUS / THE LAKE

---



The Lake is the symbol of pleasure and satisfaction.

*Related trigram:* ☲, the youngest son, with whom it combines its force

## The Eight Trigrams

---

*Action:* Brings joy.

*Pronunciation:* dui.

*Natural symbol:* Lake, marsh, wetlands, pond, shallow water, calm and deep.

The mirror of the lake.

*Member of the family:* The youngest daughter.

*Body part:* Mouth and tongue.

*Animal:* Sheep. The broken line at the top of this trigram shows the sheep horns. Sheep and goat have the same name and associations in China.

*Season and time:* Middle of autumn (harvest time); the evening.

*Weather:* Cloudy.

*Cardinal point:* West.

*Other associations:* A sorceress; decay and breaking (of plants and fruits); removal (of fruits); hard and saline soil; the concubine; smash, break; metal; defense; weapons; killing.

God brings pleasure to the creatures in ☱.

## Chinese Pronunciation

In this book, the pronunciation of Chinese characters is indicated using *Hanyu Pinyin*, which is a transliteration system that has prevailed almost universally in the last decades.

*Pinyin* uses four accents to indicate the pronunciation of each Chinese syllable, indicating the tone either with different accents or with numbers.

The following table shows the basic pronunciation for *Pinyin*, without indicating how to use the accents or tones.


Pinyin	English	Explanation
b	spit	unaspirated p, as in spit
p	pay	strongly aspirated p, as in pit
m	may	as in English mummy
f	fair	as in English fun
d	stop	unaspirated t, as in stop
t	take	strongly aspirated t, as in top
n	nay	as in English nit
l	lay	as in English love
g	skill	unaspirated k, as in skill
k	kay	strongly aspirated k, as in kill
h	hay	like the English h if followed by “a”. It is pronounced roughly like the Scots ch and Russian x (Cyrillic “kha”).

Pinyin	English	Explanation
j	hatch	No equivalent in English. Like q, but unaspirated. Not the s in Asia, despite the common English pronunciation of “Beijing”.
q	cheek	No equivalent in English. Like cheek, with the lips spread wide with ee. Curl the tip of the tongue downwards to stick it at the back of the teeth and strongly aspirate.
x	she	No equivalent in English. Like she, with the lips spread and the tip of your tongue curled downwards and stuck to the back of teeth when you say ee.
zh	junk	Rather like ch (a sound between choke, joke, true, and drew, tongue tip curled more upwards). Voiced in a toneless syllable.
ch	church	as in chin, but with the tongue curled upwards; very similar to nurture in American English, but strongly aspirated.
sh	shirt	as in shoe, but with the tongue curled upwards; very similar to marsh in American English
r	ray	Similar to the English z in azure and r in reduce, but with the tongue curled upwards, like a cross between English “r” and French “j”.
z	reads	unaspirated c, similar to something between suds and cats; as in suds in a toneless syllable
c	hats	like the English ts in cats, but strongly aspirated, very similar to the Polish c.
s	say	as in sun
w	way	as in water.
y	yea	as in yes. Before a u, pronounce it with rounded lips.

## Glossary

**Cross(ing) the Great River:** In ancient China, crossing rivers, either at a ford or when the river was frozen, was not an easy task. It implicated dangers and hardships; hence crossing the great river means to carry out a difficult undertaking.

**Determination:** The word *zhēn*, translated as “determination” in this translation also means “perseverance, persistence, steadiness, firmness; straight, correct, verified, certain; pure, loyal”. The original meaning of *zhēn* was from the beginning “to determine an uncertain matter through divination”, but with time it was used to indicate a strong commitment to proceed correctly, hence in other translations it may appear as “perseverance”, but the word “determination” covers better both the original and the later meanings.

**Hexagram:** It is a graphic symbol (*Gua*), a drawing composed of six parallel lines, some whole and other broken. Example: . There are 64 different hexagrams. Each hexagram also includes some texts as **The Judgment** (*Guaci*), comments for each line and sometimes other sections from the **Ten Wings**, as **The Image** (*Daxiang*). It is common to use the word hexagram to refer not only to the drawing but to all related texts. Most probably hexagrams precede the **Zhouyi**. It is not known if they were created by combining different trigrams or if the trigrams were abstracted from the hexagrams.

**I Ching:** See **Yijing**.

**Image, The:** The Image (*Daxiang*) comes from the **Ten Wings**.

**Judgment, The:** This is a text (called *Guaci*) that explains the meaning of the hexagram and whose first one or two characters are used as a tag to name the hexagram.

**King:** The king is a leader that rules people. He may symbolize anybody who is an authority in its own domain (like a ruler, or the head of a family or business). Usually the fifth line of the hexagrams is the one representing the king, but sometimes a different line may be the ruler.

**King Wen:** see **Wen, King**.

**Loan:** We use the term “loan” or “phonetic loan” as a reference to phonetic loans that replace one Chinese character by another with similar sound.

**Noble:** The words translated as noble are *jūn zǐ*, which was a term applied originally to the offspring of the princes and to minor aristocracy. With time, other meanings were added to the word:

- A person of noble character or high principles.
- An honorific word used for women to refer to her husband.
- The Confucian philosophy added the “superior man” concept to *jūn zǐ*.

In many cases *jūn zǐ* is translated as “superior man”, following Confucian guidelines, but the word “noble” is more inclusive, since it covers both the original meaning of the word but also gives the idea of “high principles” and “superior man”. To translate *jūn zǐ* as “superior man” is anachronistic, since this meaning was coined several centuries after the first part of the **Yijing** was written.

**No defect:** The Chinese words for this term are *wú jiù*, it can be translated as well as “without fault, no error”. Notice that this prognostication doesn’t promise success, it only says that there will be neither blame nor calamity.

**Shame or Regret:** This is a warning of trouble. Its meaning covers both an external objective situation as the subjective feelings involved with it. Other associated meanings are “humiliation, regret, distress, grief, sorrow”.

**Shang:** The **Shang** dynasty ruled from the 17th to the 11th century BC; it was followed by the **Zhou** dynasty.

**ShiJing:** The Book of Odes comes from the same time than the **Yijing**; several poetical images and words are common to both books.

**South-west:** South-west means retreating and north-east indicates advancing, because the **Zhou** dynasty has his home grounds to the south-west of the **Shang** capital city. The south is associated with community work and summer and the north with reporting to a master and the

dark and cold winter. To go south also indicates to go back to normal life and to avoid trouble and danger.

**Temple:** The temple symbolizes a shared project or idea that summons peoples around.

**Ten Wings:** The **Ten Wings** are ten annexes added to the **Zhouyi** several centuries after it was written. They come from various sources, some of them certainly are from the Confucian school, but it is not currently believed that they are a direct work from the hand of Confucius. Probably the **Ten Wings** were composed between 200 BC and 200 A.D., during the *Han* dynasty. The only part of the **Ten Wings** included in this translation is **The Image** (*Daxiang*).

**Trigram:** Please see **The Eight Trigrams**, in the page 359.

**Wen, King:** Kin *Wen* was the founder of the **Zhou** dynasty, around 1000 BC, in the Chinese Bronze Age. According to tradition, he was the author of the Judgments of the **Yijing**. The **Zhou** dynasty replaced the **Shang** dynasty. See also **Zhouyi**.

**Yang and Yin:** In the **Yijing**, with its philosophy of change and transformation of opposites, there is the germ of the ideas that lead to the doctrine of *Yin-Yang*, several centuries later. Note that only the Chinese character for *Yin* appears in the **Zhouyi**. In this book, we mostly use the terms *Yang* and *Yin* to indicate the two different kinds of lines in hexagrams: broken (which are *yin*) and whole (which are *yang*). *Yang* is associated with attributes such as: masculine, active, light, hot and hard and *yin* with the opposite attributes: feminine, passive, dark, cold and soft. They are interconnected principles and always alternate constantly in the flow of change, *yang* turns into *yin* and vice versa. *Yang* and *Yin* forces are present in each person, ebbing and flowing harmonically.

**Yijing:** See **Zhouyi**.

**Zhou:** The *Zhou* dynasty ruled from around 1000 BC to 221 BC. It replaced the **Shang** dynasty. See **Wen, King**.

**Zhouyi:** The Book of Changes was known originally as *Zhouyi* (The Change of the **Zhou**). Tradition tells us that King *Wen* wrote the texts that accompany each hexagram, "The Judgment". His son, the Duke *Dan* of **Zhou** added explanatory texts for each line of the hexagrams. The texts due to King *Wen* and his son were known in his time (the Bronze Age in China) as *Zhouyi*, "The Changes of the **Zhou**" being **Zhou** the name of the dynasty started by King *Wen*. After the **Ten Wings** were added to the *Zhouyi*, it was known as **Yijing** (Book or Classic of Changes).

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## The Yarrow-Stalks Oracle

The yarrow stalks method has been in use for the last three thousand years as the traditional way to consult the *Yijing*.

The stalks used by the ancient Chinese were dried stalks of the Asian Yarrow, *Achillea mongolica*, in Europe the closest species is the European Yarrow, *Achillea millefolium*. Notice that some people use thin wooden or bamboo sticks instead *Achillea* stalks.

The number of sticks is fifty. We do not know the size of the sticks in ancient times, but any thickness, length and material will suffice, if you can handle them easily in your hands.

If the number of sticks is not fifty, they will not produce the correct results; hence they should be stored safely to avoid losing any stick. It is advisable to keep the sticks wrapped in a clean linen cloth or at least store them in a container that keeps them clean.

Notice that the probabilities of obtaining changing *yang* and *yin* lines are not the same using sticks than when using coins to obtain an oracle.

With coins, there is the same chance of obtaining changing *yang* or *yin* lines, but with the sticks, there are more chances of obtaining changing *yang* lines than changing *yin* lines.

When tossing coins there is a one in eight chance of obtaining a changing line –either *yang* or *yin*–, when using sticks there is one in sixteen chance of getting a changing *yin* line, but three in sixteen chances of getting a changing *yang* line. The probabilities of getting non changing *yang* and *yin* lines are evened with coins, but with sticks there is slightly more chance of getting non changing *yin* than non changing *yang* lines.

In practice, both oracular methods work equally well. The main difference is that coin tossing is easier and faster but using the sticks is more complicated –at least until you are used to it– and takes more time.

### Usage

After you have written your question, unwrap the 50 sticks and put one of them back in the linen cloth wrap, since only 49 will be used. Follow the steps below six times, to obtain the six lines that will draw the hexagram—there may be two hexagrams if there are changing lines in your answer—that will be the oracle's answer. Lines will be drawn from bottom to top.

1. Divide the 49 sticks at random in two heaps and put them on the table, on your right and left sides.
2. Take one stick from the right-hand heap and place it between the little and the ring fingers of your left hand.
3. Take the left-hand heap with your left hand and start taking groups of four sticks from it, placing them away (in a heap that we will call Group A), until you have 4 or less sticks remaining in your left hand. Place this remainder between the ring and the middle fingers of your left hand.
4. Take the right-hand heap with your left hand and start taking groups of four sticks from it, placing them away (in Group A), until you have 4 or less sticks remaining in your left hand. Place this remainder between the forefinger and the middle finger of your left hand.
5. Now you will have either 9 or 5 sticks in your left hand: the first one that you put there before counting groups of four, and the two remainders of the counting. If there are 9, count 2; if there are 5, count 3; write down that number. Notice that you will have to write down three numbers for each line of the hexagram.
6. Put away the sticks in your left hand (in a heap that we will call Group B), leaving only the single stick between your little and ring fingers. Divide the sticks in Group A in two heaps at random and put them on your right and left sides. Go back to step 3 and repeat the previous steps until you have written down three numbers (3+3+3, 2+2+2 or different combinations of 2 and 3).
7. Once you have written down three numbers you already have defined one line of the hexagram. Join all the 49 sticks on the table (Groups A and B) and go back to step 1. After you have the numbers for the six lines, the divination will be concluded. Write the three numbers for each line in a separate line, starting from bottom—for the first line—to top—for the last line—.

After your consultation is done you will have written down some numbers as the following example shows:

6 <sup>th</sup> line	$2 + 3 + 3 = 8$	→	A non-changing <i>yin</i> line	-- --
5 <sup>th</sup> line	$2 + 3 + 2 = 7$	→	A non-changing <i>yang</i> line	— —
4 <sup>th</sup> line	$3 + 2 + 2 = 7$	→	A non-changing <i>yang</i> line	— —
3 <sup>rd</sup> line	$3 + 3 + 3 = 9$	→	A changing <i>yang</i> line	— ⊙ —
2 <sup>nd</sup> line	$3 + 2 + 3 = 8$	→	A non-changing <i>yin</i> line	-- --
1 <sup>st</sup> line	$2 + 2 + 2 = 6$	→	A changing <i>yin</i> line	-- × --

As you can notice each number corresponds to some kind of line:

8	=	A non-changing <i>yin</i> line	-- --
6	=	A changing <i>yin</i> line	-- × --
9	=	A changing <i>yang</i> line	— ⊙ —
7	=	A non-changing <i>yang</i> line	— —

Broken lines are *yin* and whole lines are *yang*. If you have any changing lines in your hexagram, a second hexagram will be generated by replacing every changing line by a non-changing line. If the changing line was *yang* it will be replaced by a *yin* line and vice versa.

Example:



The first hexagram (55) has only a changing *yang* line in the third position.

The second hexagram (51) is generated by replacing the changing line by a non-changing line. If the changing line is *yang* it is replaced by a *yin* line and vice versa. In this case the changing *yang* line in the third position was replaced by a *yin* line to form the second hexagram.

Of course, if there are no changing lines you will not have a second hexagram.

For information about the interpretation of the answer see **How to interpret the oracle**, in page 13. To know the hexagram numbers for your drawings, please see the **Chart of the Hexagrams and Trigrams** in page 375.

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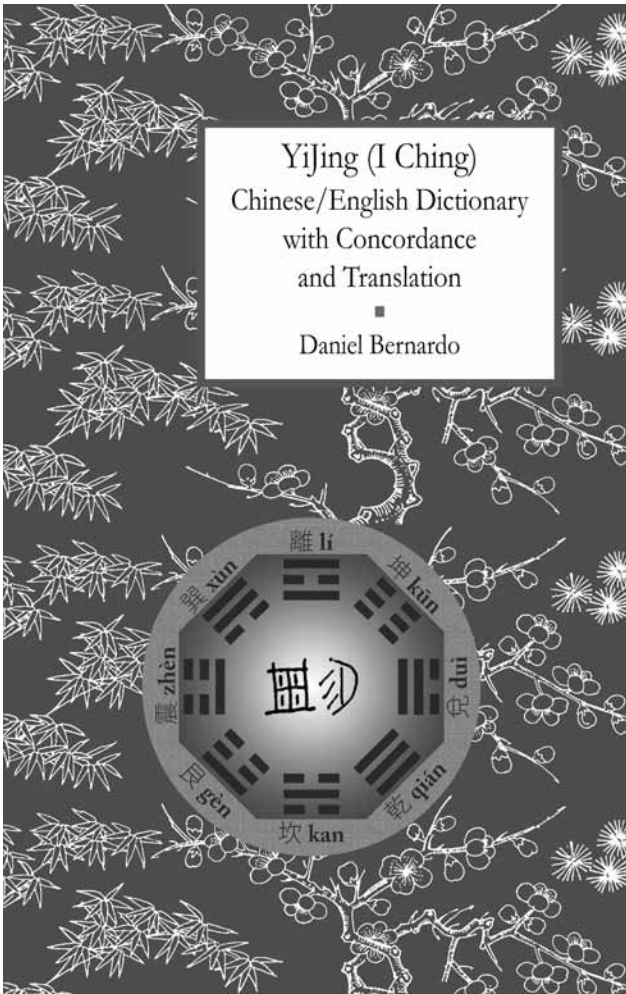
## Chart of the Trigrams and Hexagrams

Upper ► Lower ▼	<i>Qian</i> ☰	<i>Zhen</i> ☳	<i>Kan</i> ☵	<i>Gen</i> ☶	<i>Kun</i> ☷	<i>Xun</i> ☴	<i>Li</i> ☲	<i>Dui</i> ☱
<i>Qian</i> ☰	1	34	5	26	11	9	14	43
<i>Zhen</i> ☳	25	51	3	27	24	42	21	17
<i>Kan</i> ☵	6	40	29	4	7	59	64	47
<i>Gen</i> ☶	33	62	39	52	15	53	56	31
<i>Kun</i> ☷	12	16	8	23	2	20	35	45
<i>Xun</i> ☴	44	32	48	18	46	57	50	28
<i>Li</i> ☲	13	55	63	22	36	37	30	49
<i>Dui</i> ☱	10	54	60	41	19	61	38	58

Each hexagram is composed by two trigrams, one comprises the lower three lines of the hexagram and the other corresponds to the three upper lines.

The above table shows all possible combinations of the eight trigrams, in that way you can find easily the number for any hexagram drawing.

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